MARVEL COMICS
THE CHILD WITHIN: PART 2 OF 6
the SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN
$1.00 US
$1.25 CAN
179
AUG
UK 60p
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
WHILE A CITY TREMBLES...
SPIDER-MAN® VERSUS VERMIN!™
50 YEARS OF CAPTAIN AMERICA
1941 – 1991
PLUS: WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HARRY?!

BITTEN BY A RADIOACTIVE SPIDER, STUDENT PETER PARKER GAINED THE PROPORTIONATE STRENGTH AND AGILITY OF AN ARACHNID! ARMED WITH HIS WONDROUS WEB-SHOOTERS, THE RELUCTANT SUPER HERO STRUGGLES WITH SINISTER SUPER-VILLAINS, MAKING ENDS MEET, AND MAINTAINING SOME SEMBLANCE OF A NORMAL LIFE!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN!™

NO. YOU'RE NOT GOING TO EAT ANYBODY UP. YOU DON'T WANT TO EAT ANYBODY UP.

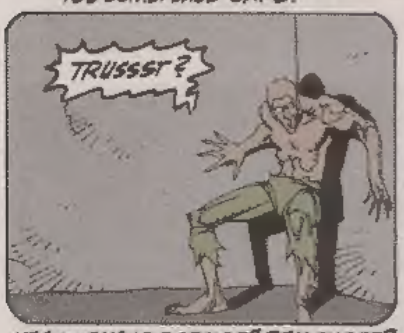
THAT'S VERMIN TALKING. YOU'RE NOT VERMIN.

VERMIN'S A COCOON, AND INSIDE THAT COCOON IS SOMEBODY ELSE. SOMEBODY WHO'S BEEN BADLY HURT.

I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU. NO ONE'S GOING TO HURT YOU. I WANT TO TAKE YOU SOMEPLACE SAFE.

SAFE AND WARM. WHERE YOU'LL FEEL SECURE. WHERE YOU'LL BE AT HOME.

I WON'T TAKE YOU ANYWHERE YOU DON'T WANT TO GO. BUT YOU'VE GOT TO TRUST ME. WILL YOU TRUST ME?



YES. LIKE YOU DID BEFORE? REMEMBER? WHEN YOU CLOSED YOUR EYES AND LET MY VOICE LEAD YOU DOWN THOSE STAIRS?

FARTHER AND FARTHER DOWN THE STAIRS. ONE STEP AT A TIME. NO HURRY. NO CARES.

AND, WITH EACH STEP, YOU FEEL THE COCOON AROUND YOU MELTING AWAY. YOU DON'T NEED IT.

VERMIN'S GONE NOW, ISN'T HE?

AND WHO AM I TALKING TO?

EDWARD.

THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN™ Vol. 1, No. 179, August, 1991. (ISSN# 0898-1833) Published by MARVEL COMICS, Terry Stewart, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Group Vice President, Publishing. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, NY AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. Published monthly. Copyright © 1991 by Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Price $1.00 per copy in the U.S. and $1.25 in Canada. Subscription rate for 12 issues: $12.00 U.S., $17.00 Canada, and $24.00 foreign. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN (including all prominent characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof) is a trademark of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN, c/o MARVEL COMICS, 9TH FLOOR, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. Printed in the U.S.A.

I know thisss place.
at leassst... I think I do.
I wasss happy here. (sad!)
I wasss sssafe here. (afraid!)
WHAT'RE YOU WAITING FOR? AREN'T YOU GONNA GO IN?
THISSS HOUSSSE. HOUSSSE OF LIESS. HOUSSSE OF MASSSS.
IT'S HOME.
HOME?
warm flesh. sssweet sssmell. sssskin ssso dark. lipsss ssso full.
MOMMY?
GO AHEAD IN. DON'T BE AFRAID.
but the darkness. the sssounds. the bad thing. it--
it makesss me hungry.

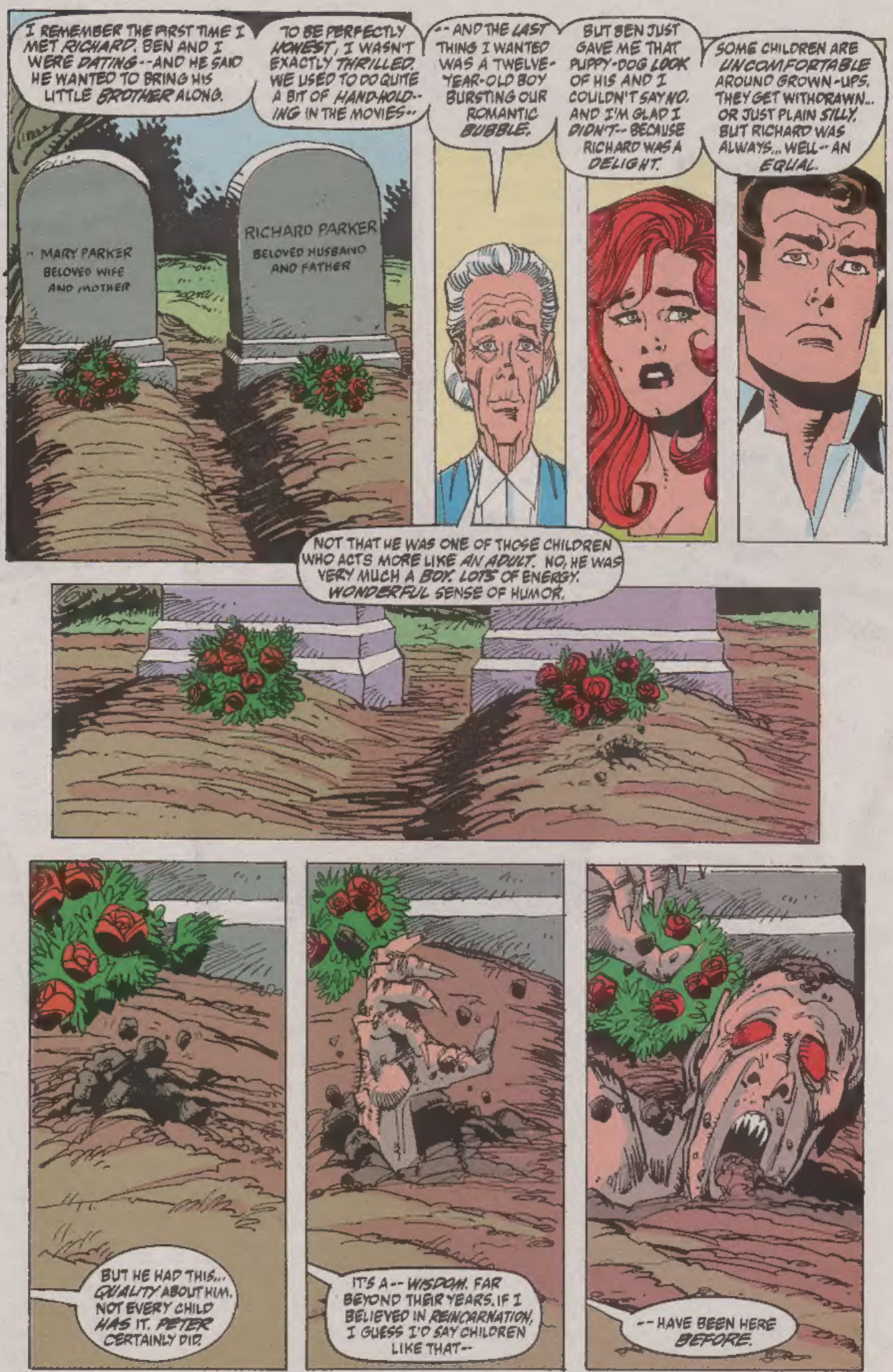
littleboy. sssstrange sssad littleboy. where did he come from? why doesss he care about me? like she did: doctor.
doctor wasss alwaysss niccce to me. doctor wasss my friend.
and doctor is... inssside? no...not doctor. Mommy.
AREN'T YOU COMING?
NOT YET. I'LL WAIT OUT HERE.
PLEASSSE.
I TOLD YOU- YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID ANYMORE.
but i am afraid!
but why should i be?
no one can hurt me! no one can ssscare me!
(only the bad thing.)
im vermin! i can kill and tear and rip and chew! i...
(only the bad thing.)
...i'm ssstill afraid...
mommy will help me. mommy will make it better.
but--what if mommy's not in there?
only one way to find out.

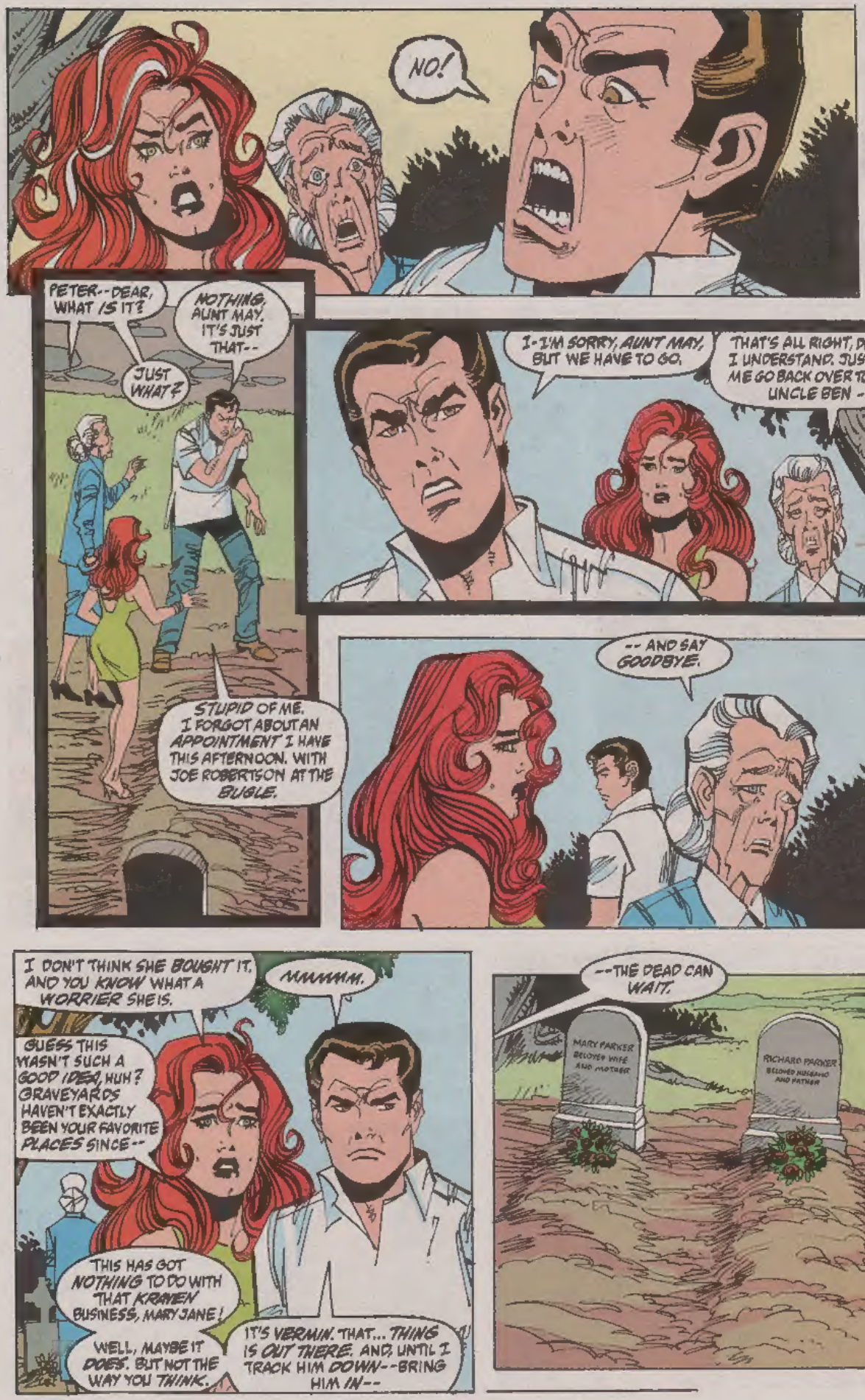
different sssmell.
different touch.

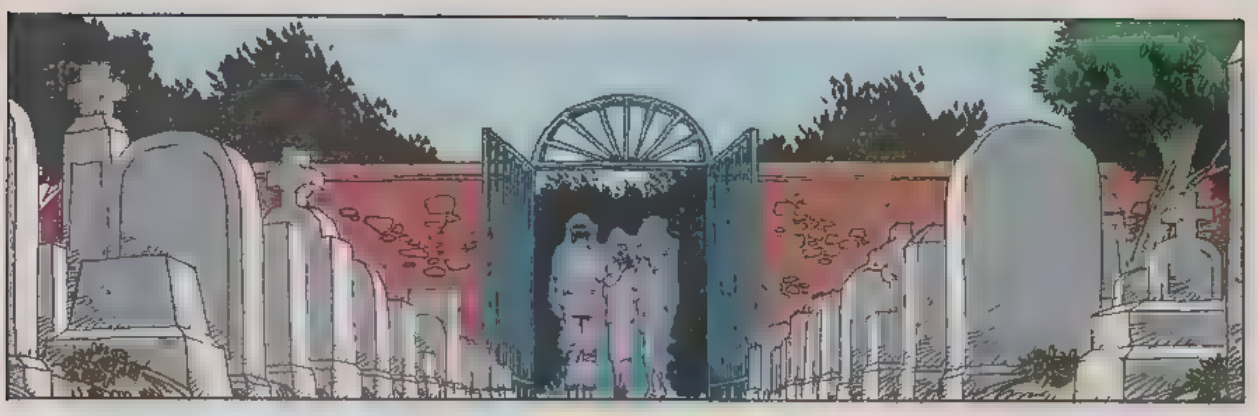
but i remember.
daddy--
--i'm home.

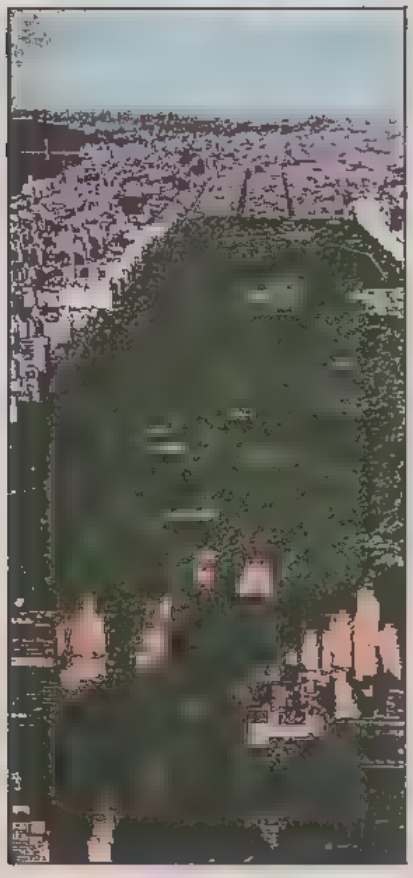
BLAM!
AAAAEEEEEE!
KRA
AASH!

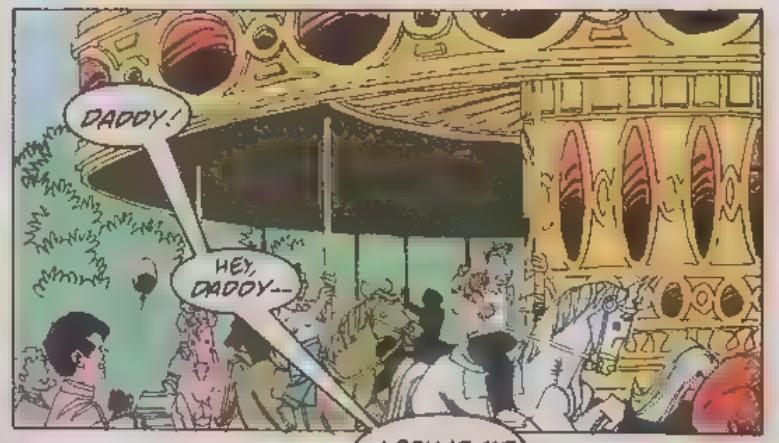
YOU KNOW, MARY JANE, I'VE BEEN BRINGING PETER OUT HERE EVERY YEAR SINCE HE WAS A LITTLE BOY. I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT.
SO MANY OF OUR RELATIVES ARE HERE: BOTH MY PARENTS, MY SISTER ANNIE, BEN, OF COURSE.
AND PETER'S MOTHER AND FATHER.
THE CHILD WITHIN PART TWO
WOUNDS
J. M. DeMATTEIS WRITER
SAL BUSCEMA ARTIST
RICK PARKER LETTERER
BOB SHAREN COLORIST
DANNY FINGEROTH EDITOR
TOM DeFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF

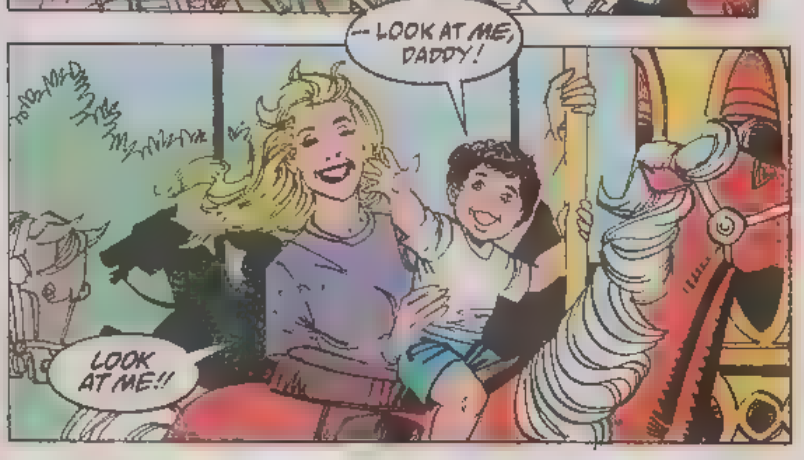

I REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I MET RICHARD. BEN AND I WERE DATING--AND HE SAID HE WANTED TO BRING HIS LITTLE BROTHER ALONG.
TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST, I WASN'T EXACTLY THRILLED. WE USED TO DO QUITE A BIT OF HAND-HOLDING IN THE MOVIES--
--AND THE LAST THING I WANTED WAS A TWELVE-YEAR-OLD BOY BURSTING OUR ROMANTIC BUBBLE.
BUT BEN JUST GAVE ME THAT PUPPY-DOG LOOK OF HIS AND I COULDN'T SAY NO. AND I'M GLAD I DIDN'T--BECAUSE RICHARD WAS A DELIGHT.
SOME CHILDREN ARE UNCOMFORTABLE AROUND GROWN-UPS. THEY GET WITHDRAWN... OR JUST PLAIN SILLY. BUT RICHARD WAS ALWAYS... WELL--AN EQUAL.
MARY PARKER BELOVED WIFE AND MOTHER
RICHARD PARKER BELOVED HUSBAND AND FATHER
NOT THAT HE WAS ONE OF THOSE CHILDREN WHO ACTS MORE LIKE AN ADULT. NO, HE WAS VERY MUCH A BOY. LOTS OF ENERGY. WONDERFUL SENSE OF HUMOR.
BUT HE HAD THIS... QUALITY ABOUT HIM. NOT EVERY CHILD HAS IT. PETER CERTAINLY DID.
IT'S A--WISDOM. FAR BEYOND THEIR YEARS. IF I BELIEVED IN REINCARNATION, I GUESS I'D SAY CHILDREN LIKE THAT--
--HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE.


NO!
PETER--DEAR, WHAT IS IT?
NOTHING, AUNT MAY. IT'S JUST THAT--
JUST WHAT?
I-I'M SORRY, AUNT MAY, BUT WE HAVE TO GO.
THAT'S ALL RIGHT, DEAR. I UNDERSTAND. JUST LET ME GO BACK OVER TO YOUR UNCLE BEN --
STUPID OF ME. I FORGOT ABOUT AN APPOINTMENT I HAVE THIS AFTERNOON. WITH JOE ROBERTSON AT THE BUGLE.
-- AND SAY GOODBYE.
I DON'T THINK SHE BOUGHT IT. AND YOU KNOW WHAT A WORRIER SHE IS.
MMMMM.
GUESS THIS WASN'T SUCH A GOOD IDEA, HUH? GRAVEYARDS HAVEN'T EXACTLY BEEN YOUR FAVORITE PLACES SINCE --
THIS HAS GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT KRAVEN BUSINESS, MARY JANE!
WELL, MAYBE IT DOES. BUT NOT THE WAY YOU THINK.
IT'S VERMIN. THAT... THING IS OUT THERE. AND, UNTIL I TRACK HIM DOWN--BRING HIM IN--
--THE DEAD CAN WAIT.
MARY PARKER BELOVED WIFE AND MOTHER
RICHARD PARKER BELOVED HUSBAND AND FATHER

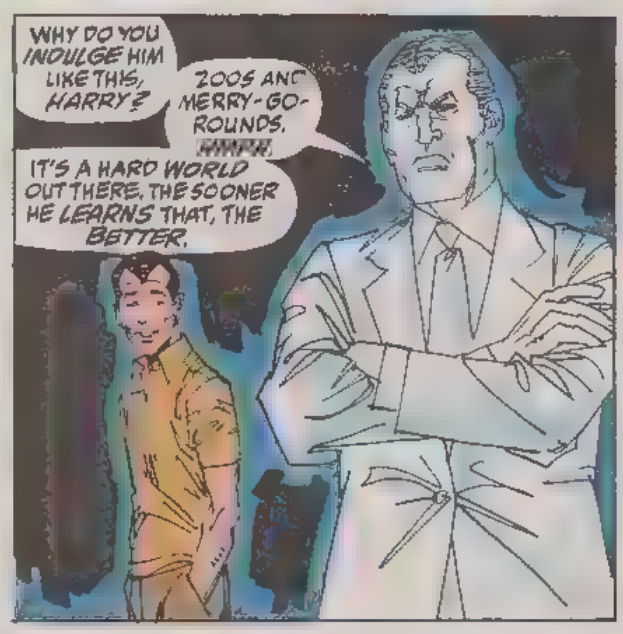




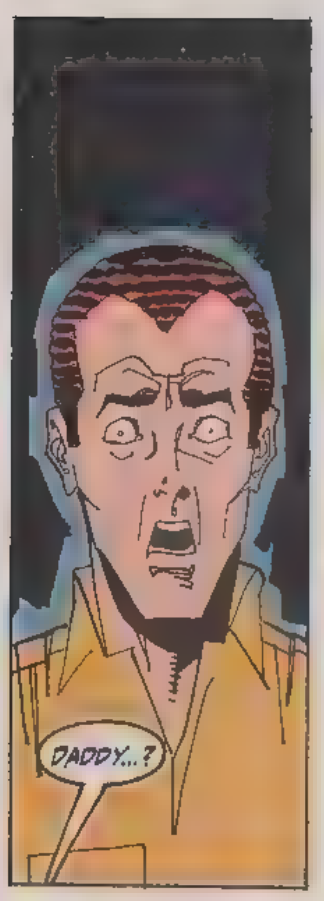

DADDY!
HEY, DADDY--

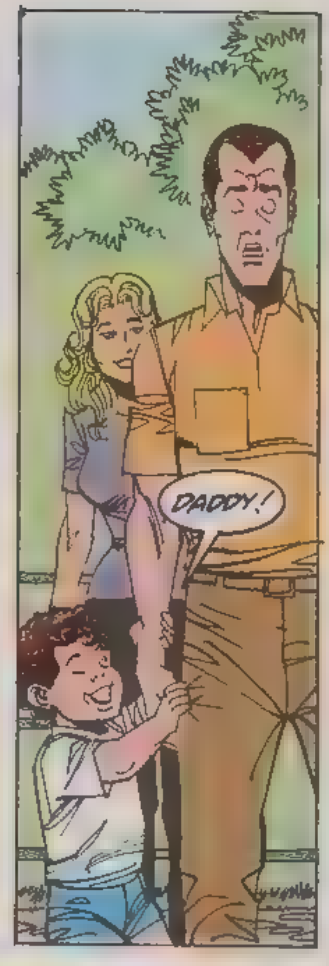

-- LOOK AT ME, DADDY!
LOOK AT ME!!

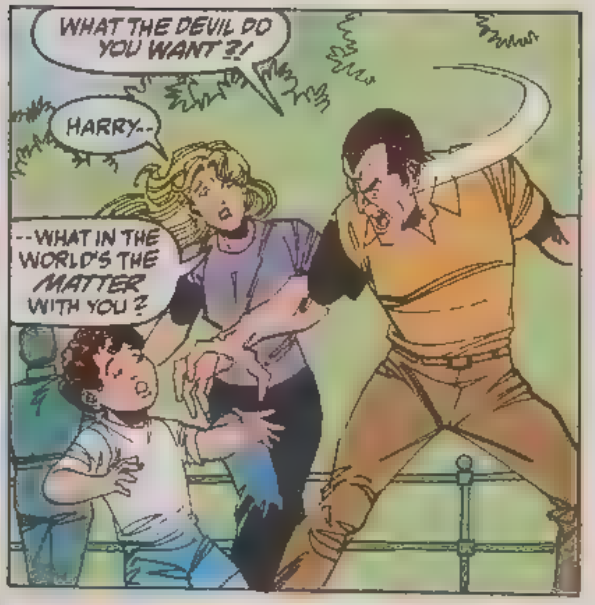
I SEE YOU, BEAUTIFUL-BOY. I--
WASTE OF TIME.

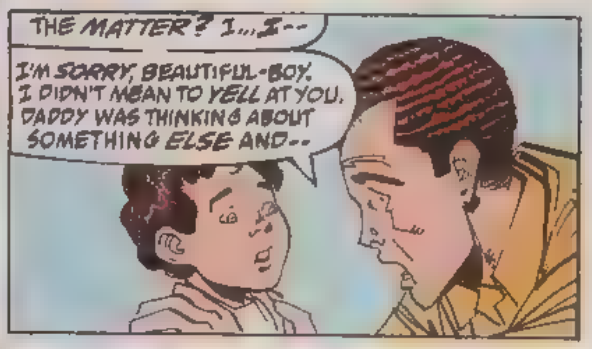

WHY DO YOU INDULGE HIM LIKE THIS, HARRY?
2005 AND MERRY-GO-ROUNDS, HMPH.
IT'S A HARD WORLD OUT THERE. THE SOONER HE LEARNS THAT, THE BETTER.

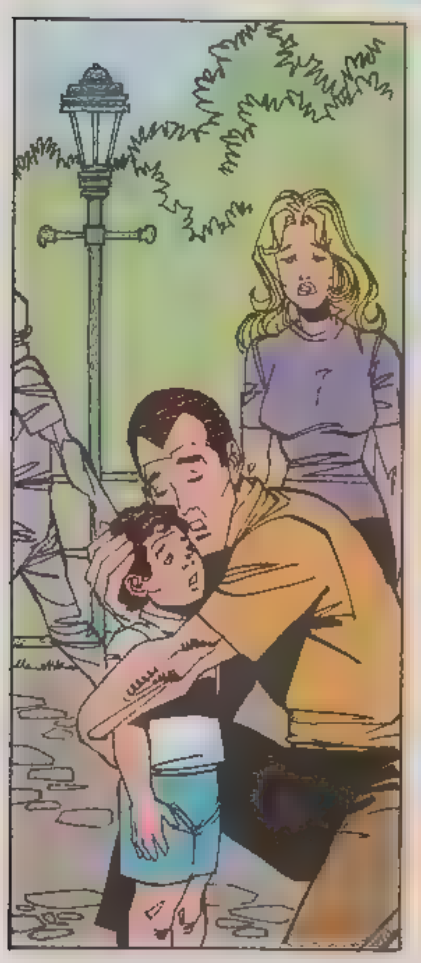
HE'S JUST A LITTLE BOY, DAD. HE NEEDS TO BE SHELTERED AND PROTECTED. HE NEEDS THE INNOCENCE, THE FANTASY, A PLACE LIKE THIS CAN PROVIDE. WE ALL DO.
YOU USED TO TAKE ME HERE WHEN I WAS LITTLE. YOU, ME, AND MOM. WE'D WALK THROUGH THE PARK AND THEN WE'D COME TO THE ZOO AND YOU'D BUY ME COTTON CANDY AND--
I NEVER DID THAT! NEVER, DO YOU HEAR ME?!
YES, YOU DID! I REMEMBER! YOU WERE A GOOD FATHER!
YOU LOVED ME!
I--LOVED YOU, HARRY?
YES. YES, I DID. BUT--
. BUT...
NORMAN OSBORN DIDN'T HAVE ANY LOVE IN HIS HEART HARRY.
HE WAS A SICK AND VICIOUS MAN.
AND YOU SHOULD BE HAPPY THAT HE'S DEAD.

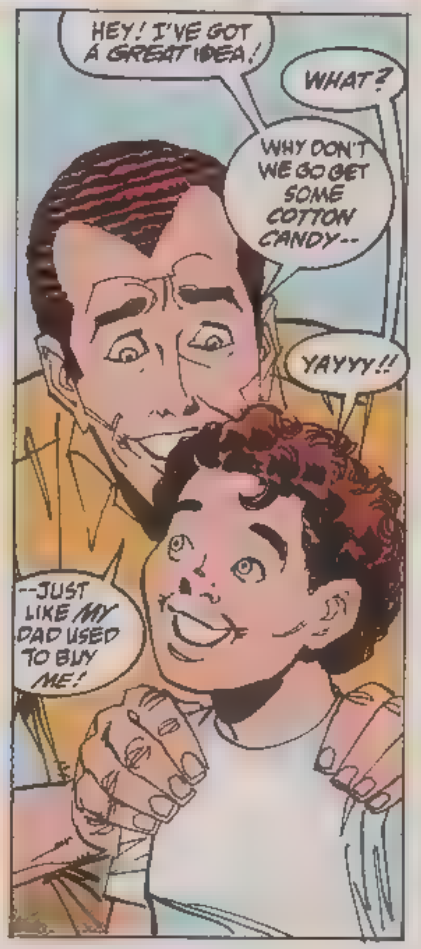

DADDY...?

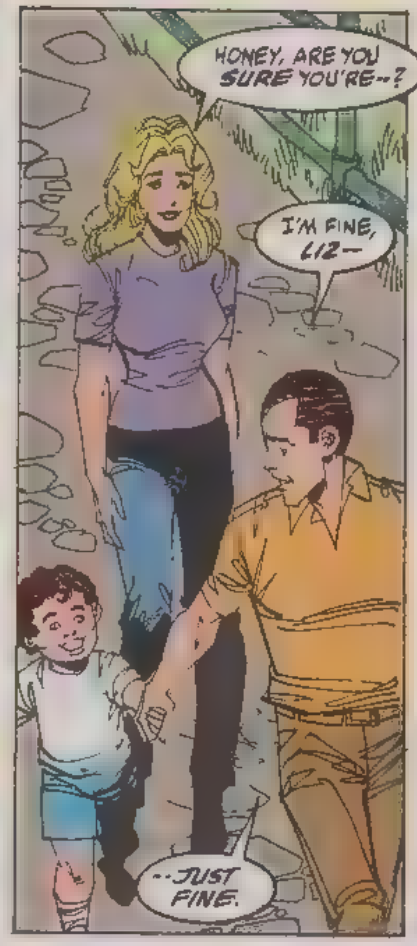

DADDY!


WHAT THE DEVIL DO YOU WANT?!
HARRY--
--WHAT IN THE WORLD'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?


THE MATTER? I...I--
I'M SORRY, BEAUTIFUL-BOY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO YELL AT YOU. DADDY WAS THINKING ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE AND--

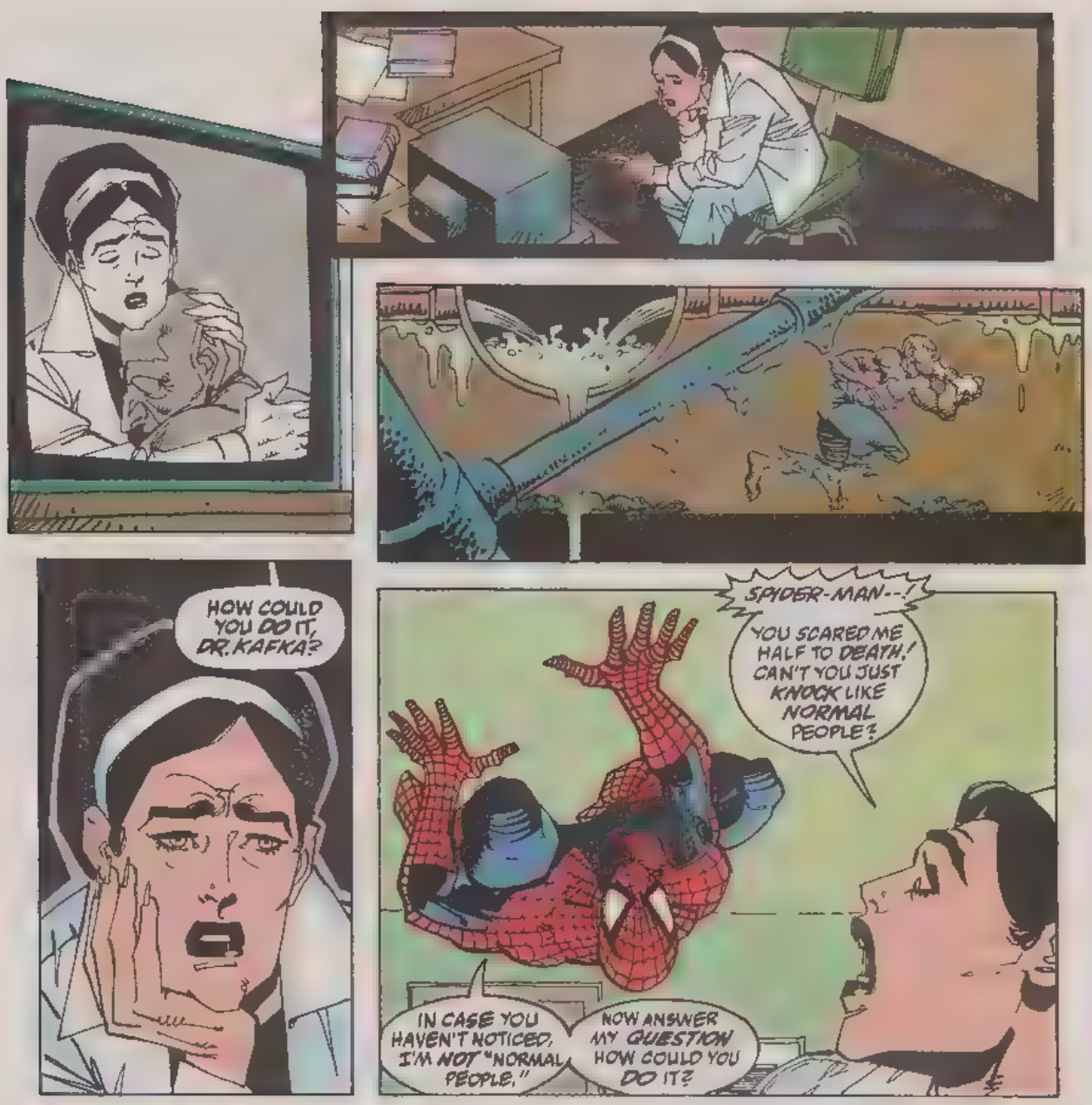


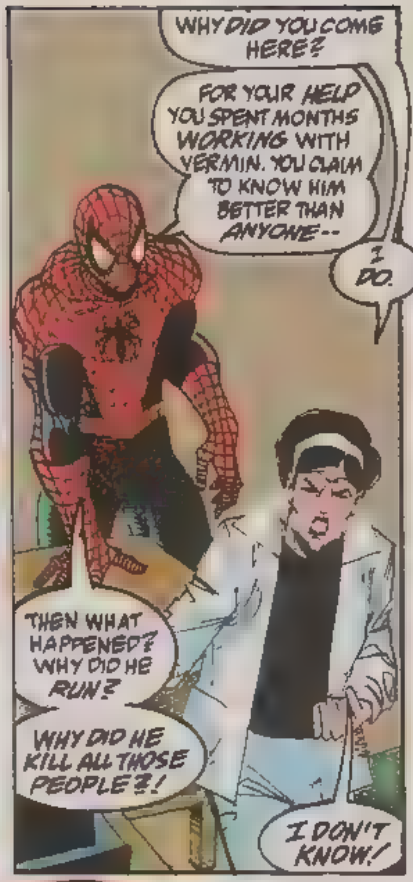

HEY! I'VE GOT A GREAT IDEA!
WHAT?
WHY DON'T WE GO GET SOME COTTON CANDY--
YAYYY!!
--JUST LIKE MY DAD USED TO BUY ME!


HONEY, ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE--?
I'M FINE, LIZ--
--JUST FINE.

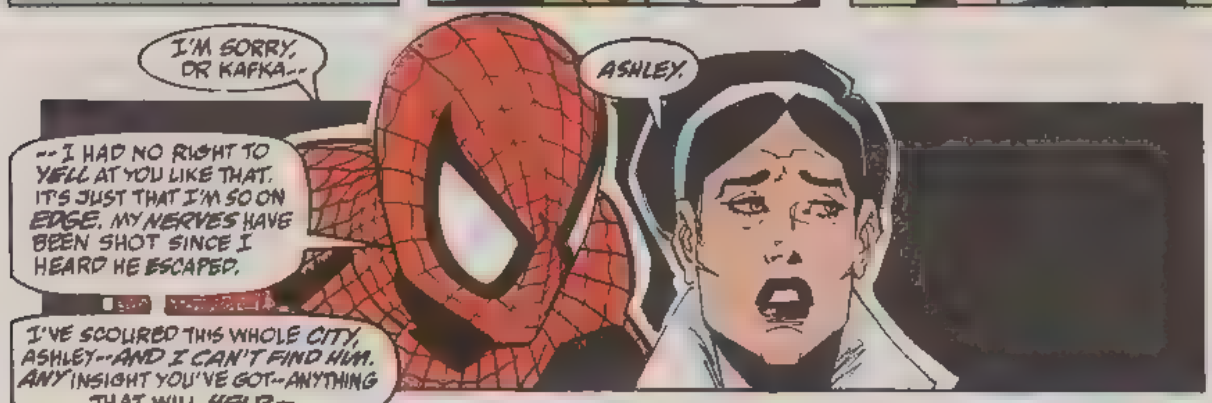
feel ssso afraid.
ssso ashamed.
hurtsss ssso bad.
ssso
hungry!
MLSSST
HAVE
FOOD!!
eateateatemup! make the bad feelingsss... make the bad thing . go away!
EatemUP!!!
RAKKK

EDWARD..?
EDWARD.
GRRRRR.

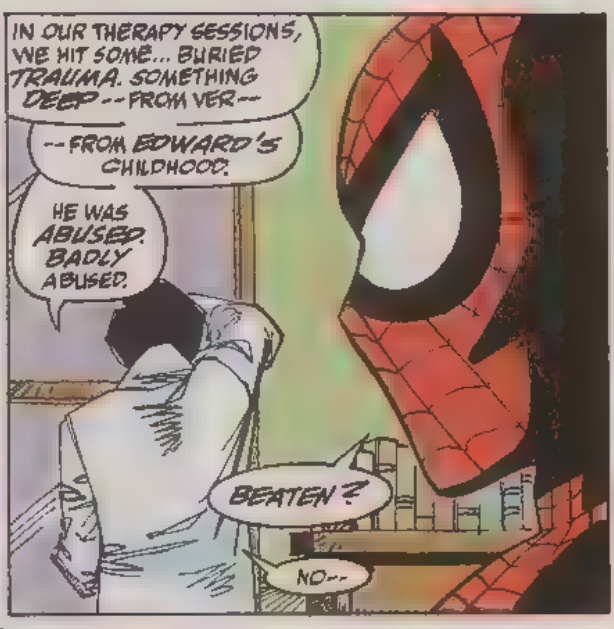

HOW COULD YOU DO IT, DR. KAFKA?
SPIDER-MAN--!
YOU SCARED ME HALF TO DEATH! CAN'T YOU JUST KNOCK LIKE NORMAL PEOPLE?
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, I'M NOT "NORMAL PEOPLE."
NOW ANSWER MY QUESTION HOW COULD YOU DO IT?
DO WHAT?
GET CLOSE TO HIM LIKE THAT. HOLD HIM--
EVERY TIME I'VE BEEN NEAR HIM .. IT'S LIKE SOMETHING IN HIM TOUCHES ALL THAT'S -- UGLY INSIDE ME. LIKE HE EMITS SOME KIND OF--
-- PSYCHIC POISON. HE DOES SEEM TO. STIRS THE WATERS OF THE UNCONSCIOUS.
BRINGS OUT THE NIGHT-TERRORS. THE HIDDEN BEASTIES
I'M NOT SURE WHY THAT IS. SOME PEOPLE DON'T HAVE THE SAME PSYCHOLOGICAL DE-FENSES AS THE REST OF US.
THEY WEREN'T SUFFICIENTLY NURTURED AS CHILDREN AND THE PROTECTIVE WALLS THAT MOST OF US HAVE DEVELOPED SIMPLY AREN'T THERE. IT'S POSSIBLE THAT VERMIN--
I DIDN'T COME HERE TO HEAR NEW-AGE PSYCHO-BABBLE.


WHY DID YOU COME HERE?
FOR YOUR HELP YOU SPENT MONTHS WORKING WITH VERMIN. YOU CLAIM TO KNOW HIM BETTER THAN ANYONE--
I DO.
THEN WHAT HAPPENED? WHY DID HE RUN?
WHY DID HE KILL ALL THOSE PEOPLE?!
I DON'T KNOW!

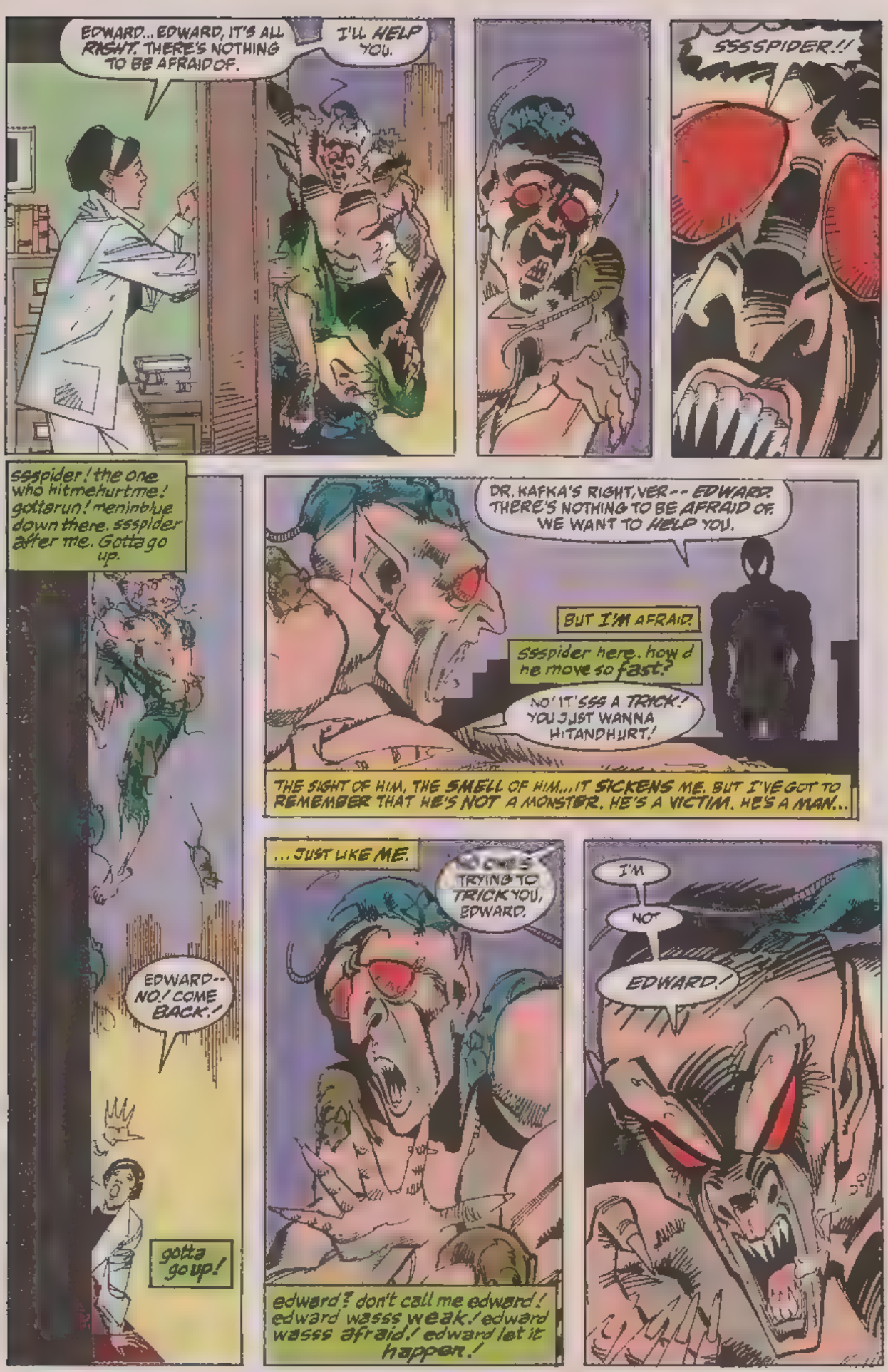
OR MAYBE I DO.

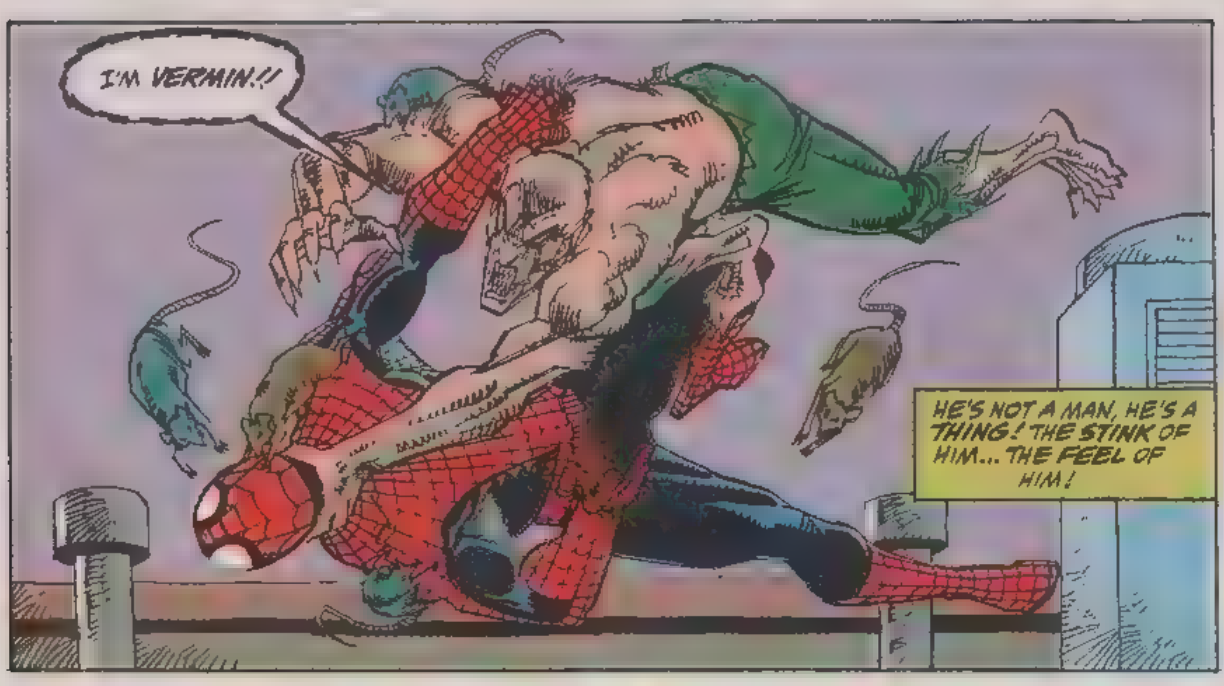

I'M SORRY, DR KAFKA--
--I HAD NO RIGHT TO YELL AT YOU LIKE THAT. IT'S JUST THAT I'M SO ON EDGE. MY NERVES HAVE BEEN SHOT SINCE I HEARD HE ESCAPED.
I'VE SCOURED THIS WHOLE CITY, ASHLEY--AND I CAN'T FIND HIM. ANY INSIGHT YOU'VE GOT--ANYTHING THAT WILL HELP--
ASHLEY.

RY CLEANING
HEALT
SAME DAY SERVICE


IN OUR THERAPY SESSIONS, WE HIT SOME... BURIED TRAUMA. SOMETHING DEEP -- FROM VER--
--FROM EDWARD'S CHILDHOOD.
HE WAS ABUSED. BADLY ABUSED.
BEATEN?
NO--

NOT ALL ABUSE LEAVES PHYSICAL--
--WOUNDS...?
DOCTOR--
--HURT.
HELP ME--
--PLEASSSE!

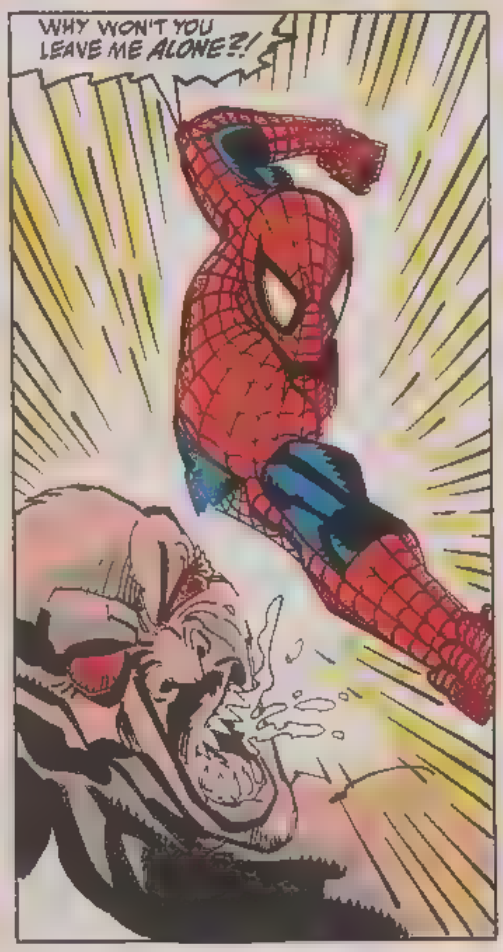

EDWARD... EDWARD, IT'S ALL RIGHT. THERE'S NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF.
I'LL HELP YOU.
SSSSPIDER!!
ssspider! the one who hitmehurtme! gotta run! meninblue down there. ssspider after me. Gotta go up.
DR. KAFKA'S RIGHT, VER-- EDWARD. THERE'S NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF. WE WANT TO HELP YOU.
BUT I'M AFRAID.
ssspider here. how d he move so fast?
NO! IT'S SSS A TRICK! YOU JUST WANNA HITANDHURT!
THE SIGHT OF HIM, THE SMELL OF HIM... IT SICKENS ME. BUT I'VE GOT TO REMEMBER THAT HE'S NOT A MONSTER. HE'S A VICTIM. HE'S A MAN...
EDWARD-- NO! COME BACK!
gotta go up!
...JUST LIKE ME.
HE'S TRYING TO TRICK YOU, EDWARD.
edward? don't call me edward! edward wasss weak! edward wasss afraid! edward let it happen!
I'M NOT EDWARD!


I'M VERMIN!!
HE'S NOT A MAN, HE'S A THING! THE STINK OF HIM... THE FEEL OF HIM!

AND THOSE RATS-- CLAWING, SCRATCHING--!
ALL OVER ME!
NO, HE'S NOT A MAN-- AND HE NEVER WAS! ARE THOSE THE EYES OF A MAN? NO, HE'S... IT'S... AN ANIMAL!

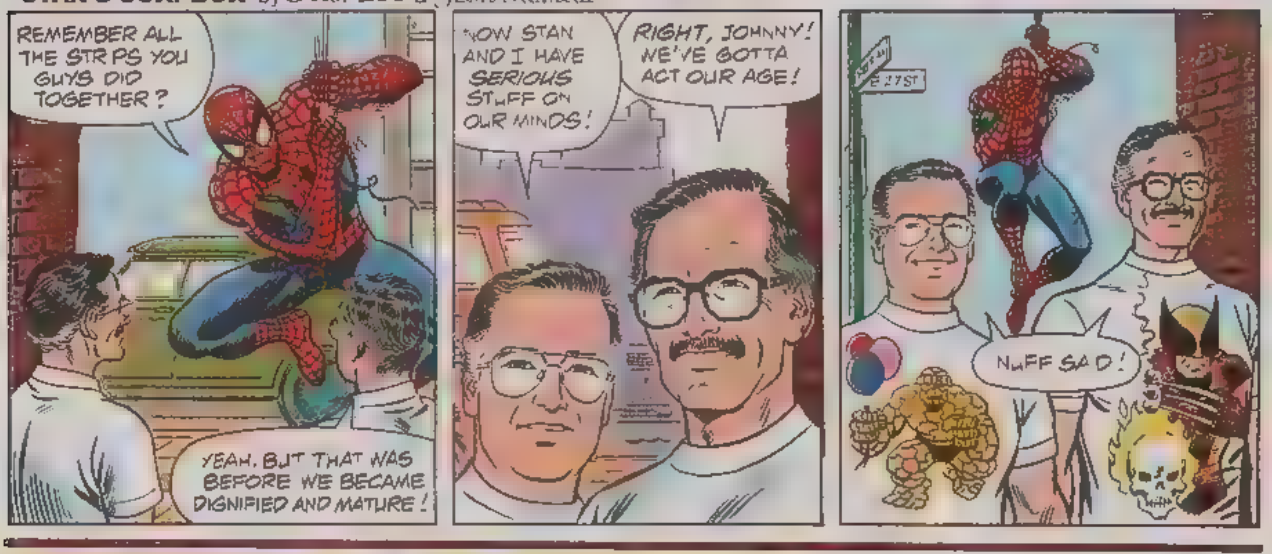
WORSE THAN AN ANIMAL! AN INHUMAN KILLER! BUT HE DOESN'T JUST KILL PEOPLE, DOES HE?
HE EATS THEM ALIVE!

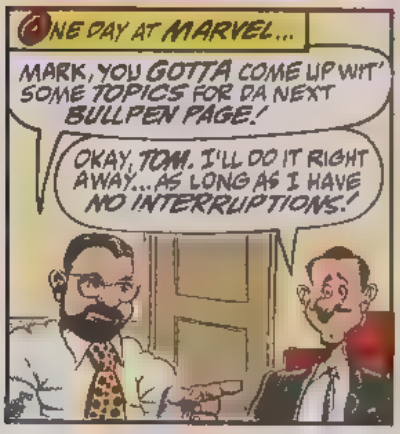
WELL, YOU'RE NOT GONNA EAT ME!!
HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN TRYING TO GET ME? HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN HUNTING ME... HOUNDING ME?

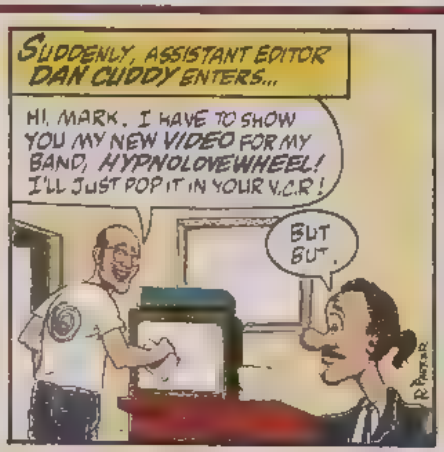

WHY WON'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE?!

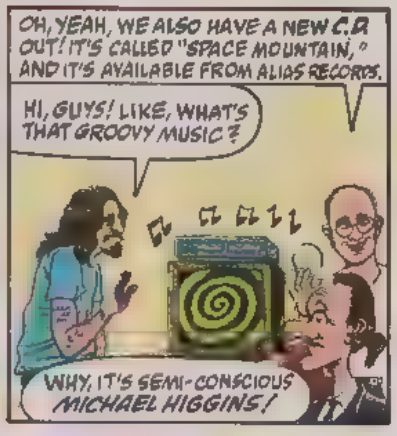
BULLPEN BULLETINS

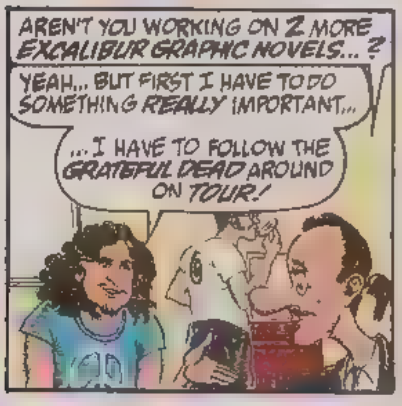
STAN'S SOAPBOX by Stan Lee & John Romita

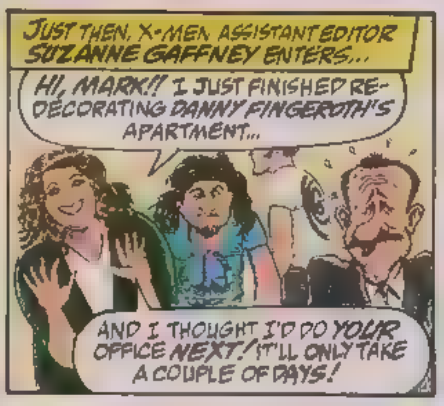

REMEMBER ALL THE STRIPS YOU GUYS DID TOGETHER?
YEAH, BUT THAT WAS BEFORE WE BECAME DIGNIFIED AND MATURE!
NOW STAN AND I HAVE SERIOUS STUFF ON OUR MINDS!
RIGHT, JOHNNY! WE'VE GOTTA ACT OUR AGE!
E 27ST
NUFF SAID!

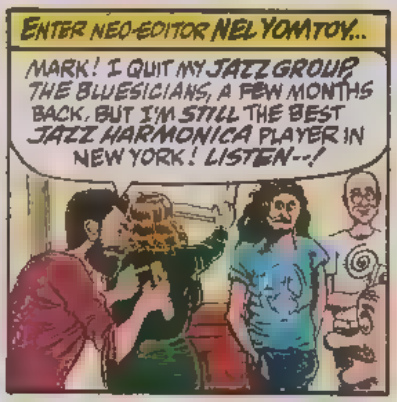

ONE DAY AT MARVEL...
MARK, YOU GOTTA COME UP WIT' SOME TOPICS FOR DA NEXT BULLPEN PAGE!
OKAY, TOM. I'LL DO IT RIGHT AWAY...AS LONG AS I HAVE NO INTERRUPTIONS!

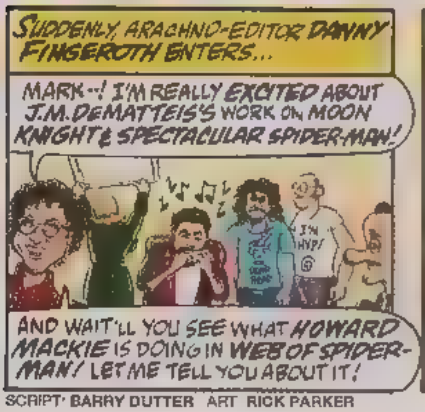

SUDDENLY, ASSISTANT EDITOR DAN CUDDY ENTERS...
HI, MARK. I HAVE TO SHOW YOU MY NEW VIDEO FOR MY BAND, HYPNOLOVEWHEEL! I'LL JUST POP IT IN YOUR V.C.R.!
BUT BUT...

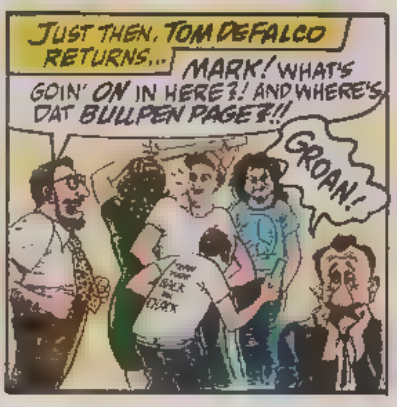

OH, YEAH, WE ALSO HAVE A NEW C.D. OUT! IT'S CALLED "SPACE MOUNTAIN," AND IT'S AVAILABLE FROM ALIAS RECORDS.
HI, GUYS! LIKE, WHAT'S THAT GROOVY MUSIC?
WHY, IT'S SEMI-CONSCIOUS MICHAEL HIGGINS!


AREN'T YOU WORKING ON 2 MORE EXCALIBUR GRAPHIC NOVELS...?
YEAH... BUT FIRST I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING REALLY IMPORTANT...
...I HAVE TO FOLLOW THE GRATEFUL DEAD AROUND ON TOUR!

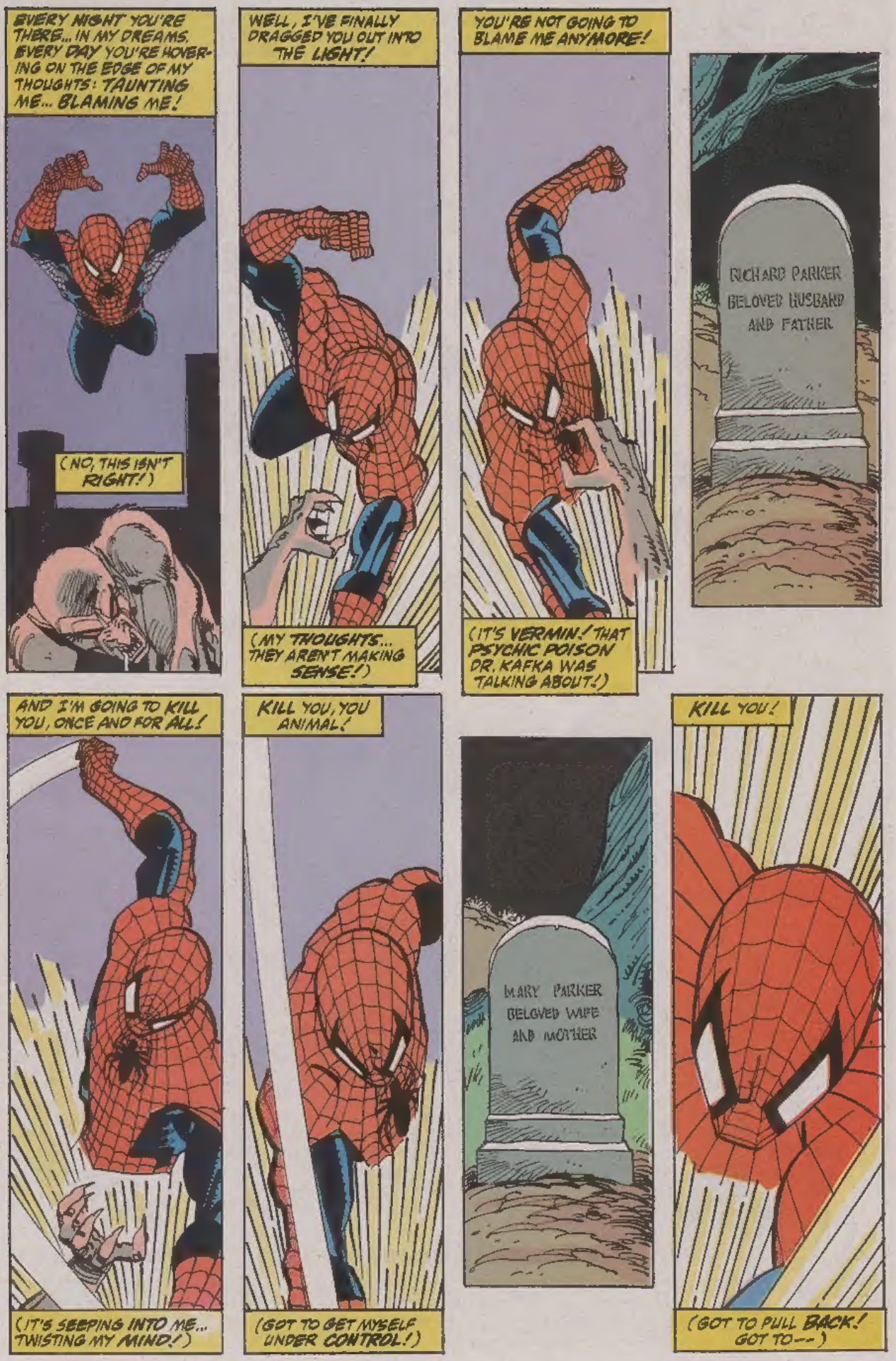

JUST THEN, X-MEN ASSISTANT EDITOR SUZANNE GAFFNEY ENTERS...
HI, MARK!! I JUST FINISHED RE-DECORATING DANNY FINGEROTH'S APARTMENT...
AND I THOUGHT I'D DO YOUR OFFICE NEXT! IT'LL ONLY TAKE A COUPLE OF DAYS!


ENTER NEO-EDITOR NEL YOMTOV...
MARK! I QUIT MY JAZZ GROUP THE BLUESICIANS, A FEW MONTHS BACK, BUT I'M STILL THE BEST JAZZ HARMONICA PLAYER IN NEW YORK! LISTEN--!


SUDDENLY, ARACHNO-EDITOR DANNY FINGEROTH ENTERS...
MARK--! I'M REALLY EXCITED ABOUT J.M. DEMATTEIS'S WORK ON MOON KNIGHT & SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN!
AND WAIT'LL YOU SEE WHAT HOWARD MACKIE IS DOING IN WEB OF SPIDER-MAN! LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT IT!



SCRIPT: BARRY DUTTER ART: RICK PARKER


EVERY NIGHT YOU'RE THERE... IN MY DREAMS. EVERY DAY YOU'RE HOVERING ON THE EDGE OF MY THOUGHTS: TAUNTING ME... BLAMING ME!
(NO, THIS ISN'T RIGHT!)
WELL, I'VE FINALLY DRAGGED YOU OUT INTO THE LIGHT!
(MY THOUGHTS... THEY AREN'T MAKING SENSE!)
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BLAME ME ANYMORE!
(IT'S VERMIN! THAT PSYCHIC POISON DR. KAFKA WAS TALKING ABOUT!)
RICHARD PARKER BELOVED HUSBAND AND FATHER
AND I'M GOING TO KILL YOU, ONCE AND FOR ALL!
(IT'S SEEPING INTO ME... TWISTING MY MIND!)
KILL YOU, YOU ANIMAL!
(GOT TO GET MYSELF UNDER CONTROL!)
MARY PARKER BELOVED WIFE AND MOTHER
KILL YOU!
(GOT TO PULL BACK! GOT TO--)

STOP!
SPIDER-MAN, IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE LIKE THIS! DON'T LET HIM DRAG YOU DOWN INTO THE DARKNESS WITH HIM!
BACK AWAY! LEAVE HIM TO ME!
BUT--
JUST DO IT FOR YOUR SAKE AS WELL AS HIS!
doctor...?
ASHLEY, I CAN'T LET YOU--
YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO TRUST ME ON THIS.
doctor wasss good to me, good and kind. like... the other one.
AND SO ARE YOU, EDWARD.
like mommy.

AHHHHH!
i trusssted mommy... and i ssstill got hurt! i trusssted mommy...
...and the bad thing ssstill happened!
CHEW HER UP!!
NO! GET AWAY FROM HER!
GET AWAY!
...E-EDWARD...
GONE.

NEXT ISSUE: THE GREEN GOBLIN IS REBORN AS THE CHILD WITHIN CONTINUES IN PART 3: SHAME!